THE OUTLYING SECTIONS: MANCHURIA

Manchuria, the most easterly of the outlying portions of China, is also the best endowed for human habitation. Divided into the three provinces of Liaoning (also called Fengtien and Shengking), Kirin, and Heilungchiang, it is often known as the "Three Eastern Provinces.'[7] Since, however, a portion of Eastern Inner Mongolia, notably the province of Jehol, is sometimes included} many Chinese prefer to denominate Manchuria simply as "The Eastern Provinces.[51]

To the west Manchuria is bounded by Mongolia, from which it is separated by the escarpment which ascends to the Mongolian plateau and which is crowned by the Hsinganling (Khingan) mountains—a range which averages about four thousand feet in height. To the north rise more mountains and, just north of them, the Amur River (or the Heilungchiang) forms a convenient boundary. On the east mountains separate Manchuria from the valley of the Ussuri and the Japan Sea. To the south the gulf of Chihli and the Yellow Sea afford access to the Pacific. The only easy land route into China proper lies along the coast where spurs reaching out from the hills which divide the province of Hopei (Chihli) from Mongolia recede only far enough to allow a narrow pass. Manchuria, therefore, has usually been distinct politically from the rest of China—not so much so, however, but that it has repeatedly been a part of the Empire. In spite of the Japanese occupation and the Japanese-supported state of Manchoukuo, it is still accounted by the Chinese as legitimately as much a part of their country as China proper.

Extensive plains, valleys, and low hills largely

make up the central portion of Manchuria. Several rivers furnish the drainage, chief among them the Liao, running southward, and the Sungari, with its leading tributary, the Nonni, running northeastward into the Amur. The area of level, arable land in Central Manchuria probably totals somewhat less than in the North China plain. East of the mouth of the Liao juts the Liaotung Peninsula, geologically a continuation of the mountains of Shantung. To the east of the Liaotung Peninsula, in turn, flows the Yalu River, the natural boundary between Manchuria and the Korean peninsula. Korea, as we shall see, has in whole or in